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TEACHER APPRAISAL, A MATCHING PROCESS.

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THIS PAPER PRESENTS A FRAMEWORK FOR DESCRIBING, IN TERMS OF A MANAGEABLE NUMBER OF CATEGORIES, THE WIDE VARIETY OF DATA WHICH A SURVEY OF EXPERT OPINION SHOWED TO BE IMPORTANT TO TEACHER EVALUATORS. IT PROCEEDS FROM THE ASSUMPTIONS THAT A TEACHER MAY BE SAID TO BE "GOOD" ONLY WHEN HE SATISFIED SOMEONE'S EXPECTATIONS, THAT PEOPLE DIFFER IN WHAT THEY EXPECT FROM TEACHERS, AND THAT A SCHEME FOR EVALUATING TEACHERS AND FOR PREDICTING TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS MUST TAKE THOSE DIFFERENCES INTO ACCOUNT. THREE POSTULATED CATEGORIES OF EXPECTATIONS RELATING TO INSTRUCTIONAL VARIABLES ARE EMPLOYED--(1) THE KINDS OF INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES ENDORSED BY THE TEACHER, (2) THE KINDS OF METHODS OF INSTRUCTION HE EMPLOYS, AND (3) THE KINDS OF RELATIONS THE TEACHER MAINTAINS WITH HIS PUPILS. AN INSTRUMENT INTENDED TO TEST OUT THIS MODEL IS DESCRIBED, AND THE RESPONSES OF MEMBERS OF A NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL GROUPS ARE REPORTED. THE FINDINGS SUPPORT THE CONCLUSION THAT THE SUBJECTS DO, IN FACT, DIFFER IN THEIR EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS ALONG THE DIMENSIONS BUILT INTO THE MODEL. THE EVIDENCE ALSO INDICATES THAT THERE IS A STRONG AFFECTIVE COMPONENT TO THESE BELIEFS AND THAT MANY PEOPLE WILL BECOME EITHER ANGRY OR ANXIOUS IF CONFRONTED WITH EVIDENCE THAT OTHERS WHOM THEY RESPECT SEE THE "GOOD TEACHER" DIFFERENTLY THAN THEY DO. (HW)

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TEACHER APPRAISAL: A MATCHING PROCESS

Center FOR THE
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Evaluation
OF INSTRUCTIONAL
PROGRAMS

University of California, Los Angeles, April 1967

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Contextual Variables - Research in this area will be concerned with measuring and evaluating differences in community and school environments and the interactions of both with instructional programs. It will also involve evaluating variations in student and teacher characteristics and administrative organization.

Criterion Measures - Research in this field is concerned with creating a new conceptualization of evaluation of instruction and in developing new instruments to evaluate knowledge acquired in school by measuring observable changes in cognitive, affective and physiological behavior. It will also involve evaluating the cost-effectiveness of instructional programs.

TEACHER APPRAISAL: A MATCHING PROCESS

Garth Sorenson and Cecily F. Gross

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Abstract

Teacher Appraisal: A Matching Process

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This paper presents a logical framework for describing, in terms of a manageable number of categories, the wide variety of data which a survey of expert opinion showed to be important to teacher evaluators. It proceeds from the assumptions that a teacher may be said to be "good" only when he satisfies someone's expectations, that people differ in what they expect from teachers, and that a scheme for evaluating teachers or for predicting teacher effectiveness must take those differences into account.

Of six postulated categories of expectations, three relate to noninstructional variables: (1) the teacher's relations with his superordinates; (2) his manner and appearance; and (3) his managerial and housekeeping skills. While these kinds of criteria may be the most frequently used by school administrators and supervisors, they are given only brief treatment in this paper.

The other three categories relate to instructional variables: (1) the kinds of instructional objectives endorsed by the teacher; (2) the kinds of methods of instruction he employs; and (3) the kinds of relations the teacher maintains with his pupils. Each of these three

categories includes two or more sub-classes. Three sub-classes of objectives are defined in terms of the kinds of pupil behavior the teacher is trying to bring about. Two sub-classes of methods and two sub-classes of teacher-pupil relations are defined in terms of what the teacher does.

An instrument intended to test out this model of beliefs about teacher role is described and the responses of members of a number of professional groups are reported. The findings support the conclusion that the subjects do in fact differ in their educational beliefs along the dimensions built into the model. Furthermore, the evidence indicates that there is a strong affective component to these beliefs and that many people will become either angry or anxious if confronted with evidence that others whom they respect see the "good teacher" differently than they do. Some implications of these findings are discussed.

Teacher Appraisal: A Matching Process

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Numerous attempts to predict teacher effectiveness have reached a dead end because of problems encountered in developing suitable criterion variables (Anderson and Hunka, 1963; Biddle, 1964; Turner and Fattu, 1960). This paper reports an approach which, it is hoped, will get around some of the criterion difficulties and lead ultimately to more useful ways of selecting and appraising teachers.

The reason so many studies have resulted in so little progress may rest with the way in which the problem has been conceptualized. Most investigators have either explicitly or implicitly assumed the existence of some single set of behaviors or traits which constitute the good teacher. They have assumed that these behaviors or traits exist as an absolute, independent of the particular judge and that they can be observed by any school administrator or supervisor who is worth his salt.

In contrast, the basic tenet of this paper is that a definition of teaching success which is formulated in terms of some single fixed teacher-ideal is both untenable and inappropriate. The school is a social institution, designed to teach the young that which citizens want them taught. Because different citizens want different things taught and be-

cause we are committed to a pluralistic system which not only permits but encourages diversity of values, we cannot properly assume a single set of educational objectives.

Differences in educational values inevitably mean differences in what teachers are expected to do. As a result, individual teachers are bound to be regarded differently by persons with varying concepts of the teacher's role. In even the most carefully planned investigations, what gets reported on a teacher rating scale is usually not an objective account of the subject's behavior, but the observer's feelings, interpretations, and evaluations of what he has observed. Ryans (1960) found that two observers simultaneously watching the same teacher tend to see and to respond to quite different events within the total teaching situation. He concluded that differences in the observers' value systems had determined the differences in perception. Mitzel and Gross (1958) recognized the role of educational values in recommending that experimenters in teacher effectiveness studies consult a hierarchy of educational values in choosing criterion dimensions. Turner (1964) has pointed out that teachers with very similar characteristics but teaching in different types of settings may find themselves at roughly opposite ends of the success continuum as defined by supervisory appraisals. In sum, teacher assessment is essentially subjective, and two observers with different expectations will inevitably disagree about the goodness of any individual whom they are judging.

If we cannot assume that the "good teacher" is something "real" out there, but rather is relative to the values, expectations, and perceptions of the person evaluating him, then what needs to be predicted, following Stern, Stein, and Bloom (1951), is not the way an individual will behave as a teacher but the way his behavior will be seen by the particular persons evaluating him. It would seem, therefore, that the first step in predicting teacher effectiveness is to spell out the nature of the role expectations which determine the responses of teacher evaluators. If this task were done, the relationship between the teacher role expectations of observers and their observations or ratings of teacher behavior could be systematically examined. It might then be possible to predict which teachers a given observer would approve and which he would disapprove.

Sorenson, Husek, and Yu (1963) made a start in the long range task of developing generally useful sets of criteria of teacher effectiveness by categorizing, in terms of a few variables, some of the teacher role expectations of groups of experienced and potential teachers. The present paper represents a second step, that of classifying into a small but comprehensive number of categories the expectations of persons who actually engage in or influence teacher selection, teacher training, and teacher practice---namely, school administrators, teacher educators, teachers, parents, and students.

The Theoretical Framework

Two sources of information were relied upon in developing categories of teacher role expectations. One consisted of books and essays by interested and informed persons who have written about public schools and the teaching process. The second consisted of pilot studies in which simple paper-pencil instruments were used systematically to question master teachers, school administrators, college professors, student teachers, and others about the information which in their opinion should be taken into account in evaluating teachers.

Non-Instructional Categories

The pilot studies made it apparent that some master teachers, school administrators, and teacher educators prefer to evaluate a teacher, in theory at least, on the basis of what his students have learned while under his direction. Others believe it to be either impossible or unnecessary to obtain information about pupil gain and deem it sufficient to have information about the extent to which the teacher himself performs in the manner "experience" has shown to be good. This second group would agree that learning is the school's raison d' être but take it for granted the desired kind of learning will occur as long as teachers behave in the accepted way and keep the institution functioning smoothly. We have labeled "non-instructional" those categories of behavior which

have to do with a smoothly operating system.

From student teachers' reports of the grading criteria employed in practice teaching by their master teachers (Sorenson, 1966), we have inferred three non-instructional categories of expectations. One of these has to do with relations with superordinates. To some administrators, the good teacher is one who seeks the advice of his superordinates and listens carefully to their suggestions which he follows quickly and enthusiastically. In contrast, other administrators want the teacher to exercise initiative and take responsibility for improving established procedures. The second category relates to appearance and manner. It comprises a large number of traits including conservative dress, impeccable grooming, unexceptional features, absence of obtrusive mannerisms, poise, and tact with parents and the community. These personal traits are central in the expectations of some persons; to others they have little importance per se. The third non-instructional category has to do with order and routine. To some, the good teacher gets accurate records in on time, performs housekeeping chores with efficiency and dispatch (keeping the room neat and clean, arranging attractive bulletin boards, keeping books neatly stacked on shelves) and handles his discipline problems without administrative assistance. To others, these behaviors are relatively less important.

Some of the criteria contained in the non-instructional categories may appear at first glance to be superficial, trivial, and irrelevant. But it is probably true that the non-instructional variables are, at present, of greater significance in determining who gets what grades in practice teaching, which teacher candidates get hired, and which teachers get tenure than are variables related to the actual instructional process. For example, a school principal pointed out that those who hire teachers make their decisions largely on the basis of "personality" as revealed in interviews and that they rarely have or feel the need for an opportunity to observe candidates teach. Nor do administrators often have precise information about what a teacher's students learn. Consequently, appearance and the possession of personableness and above average social skills are crucial for favorable evaluation. A supervisor of student teachers in elementary education remarked that a most essential trait for a young teacher is probably the ability to locate and assume her place in the pecking order of the group of teachers and administrative personnel in which she finds herself.

Instructional Categories

The sampling of books and essays and teacher rating scales (e.g., Conant, 1963; Woodring, 1959; Hutchins, 1963; Highet, 1950; Bush, 1954; Redl and Wattenberg, 1959) revealed obvious sharp differences in points of view. Three

major issues are involved, although these issues are not always stated explicitly. One is the question of the purpose or ends of education---what the schools should be trying to accomplish in our society. The second is the question of what methods of teaching are most effective. The third concerns the effect of the teacher's personality on pupil learning. These three issues suggest three additional major categories of expectations having to do with the process of instruction

Category 1: Ends. Beliefs about educational objectives can be subdivided into three sets. One set of objectives concerns subject matter. The central assumption in this case is the belief that knowledge should be the major, if not the only, goal of teaching. A second set of objectives has to do with the welfare and personal growth of the individual student. A major assumption here is that teachers must give priority to such matters as the effect of the instructional process on the pupil's self-esteem or his willingness to engage in problem solving, and must avoid inducing anxiety or dislike of school. While persons oriented to subject goals believe that a teacher has accomplished his purpose if he has taught the student arithmetic, for example, the student-oriented believe that the subject is taught not as an end in itself but, rather, as a means of developing the student as an individual. A third set of objectives has to do with the social norms, conventions, and laws which are necessary for

responsible, participating citizenship in the larger society. Individuals who give priority to these objectives think school is intended primarily to serve as the agent of the culture and the transmitter of social values to youth so that young people can take their places as adult members in their turn.

Category 2: Means. The second category has to do with beliefs about the methods by which educational objectives can best be achieved. The folklore on how best to manage children, and the body of instructional lore that gets passed from one generation of teachers to the next can be grouped into two broad categories which we have labeled Didactic and Discovery. In the Didactic or traditional role, the teacher is an expert who tells students or presents to students the information---facts or significant ideas---which they are to learn. The teacher maintains strict control over the activities through which the students learn by organizing instructional materials, preparing stimulating lectures, closely guiding classroom discussions, or using carefully programmed lessons. Course outlines parallel the order believed to be inherent in the discipline being taught. Students are rewarded for learning the "content" of the discipline.

In contrast, there is the Discovery role (Bruner, 1962). In this role, teachers do not emphasize the content of the discipline, i.e., the knowledge of facts or significant ideas,

so much as the processes by means of which knowledge in a particular discipline is created. The teacher encourages students to work with the kinds of problems and materials with which the experts in his discipline work. He may begin by helping them to identify a problem situation and some possible avenues to its solution and then encourage them to proceed on their own while providing only enough prompts and constraints to keep them from straying too far from the problem. Youngsters are rewarded, not for learning the correct solutions, but for coming up with alternative hypotheses and for thinking of as many different solutions to a problem as they can. Examples of the Discovery method are to be found in the non-verbal instruction in mathematics described by Wirtz (1963), in the discovery of patterns in mathematics described by Smith (1964), and in student-generated sequences described by Kaplan (1964). One example of the kind of "achievement" tests suggested by this approach is provided by Heath's Cognitive Preferences Test (1964).

Category 3: Interpersonal Style. Both research and common observation agree that the teacher's personality or classroom style is an extremely important factor in the instructional process (Ryans, 1960; Anderson, Brewer, and Reed, 1964). By interpersonal style we mean the kind of impression a given teacher makes on his students. Do they see him as a warm, informal, friendly, non-punitive person, inclined to close personal relationships with students? Or

do they see him as cool, impersonal, formal, strict, and somewhat distant in his interactions with them?

It seems reasonable to assume that some adults approve of the teacher who creates the one impression and that some approve of the teacher who creates the other. Some children seem to prefer the one type of teaching personality and some seem to prefer the other. Interpersonal style is probably relatively uninfluenced by the teacher's beliefs about the means and ends of education. The third variable thus cuts across the other two.

Validation Studies of the Means and Ends Variables

Studies undertaken to validate the model of teacher role expectations described above have focussed on only part of the model to date, namely, the sets of instructional variables related to the ends and means of education.

The Instrument

In these preliminary studies, it was assumed that the teacher role expectations of judges can be differentiated as falling into one of six teacher archtypes (three ends x two means). A 60-item instrument was developed, taking the form of a series of ten descriptive statements for each archtype.

Table 1

Examples of Dimensions

Subject Didactic	Subject Discovery	Student Didactic	Student Discovery	Social Norms Didactic	Social Norms Discovery
1. He is broadly trained in the humanities.	13. He deliberately experiments in order to develop more effective ways to present course materials.	21. He handles antisocial behavior not by punishing but by attempting to understand and deal with the psychological causes.	33. While expecting and tolerating inevitable mistakes, he encourages pupils to try new ways of doing things in making their personal decisions.	43. He is skillful in maintaining classroom control--pupils respond quickly to his directions.	53. He encourages pupil participation and criticism in the development of class regulations.
3. He speaks fluently, explaining his ideas logically and precisely.	16. He checks periodically to discover failures to learn material already covered and provides exercises that correct deficiencies.	24. Pupils find him willing to give advice on personal problems.	35. He handles discipline problems by assisting pupils to find alternative and less dangerous means of satisfying their needs.	44. He inculcates firm precepts of right and wrong.	55. By the nature of his assignments and by other techniques, he encourages co-operative group effort instead of competitiveness among students.
7. He is highly trained in the subject he teaches.	19. He tends to regard disciplinary problems as a challenge to his skill in timing in modifying reinforcements, and in relating material to pupil interests.	29. He makes use of conferences with parents to advise them on their childrens' problems.	40. He encourages each pupil to analyze his personal goals and the obstacles blocking him.	47. He provides pupils with a clear set of rules and procedures so that they will know at all times what is expected of them.	58. He develops the leadership ability of pupils by providing them with opportunities to take responsibility.

Figure 1

Categories of Teacher Roles

	ENDS VARIABLE					
	Subject		Student		Socialization	
Interpersonal Style Variable	warm	cold	warm	cold	warm	cold
Means variable Didactic						
Discovery						

In order to find out whether there was promise in the means and ends variables and in the 60 statements intended to define them, exploratory studies were conducted with groups of teacher educators, school administrators, prospective and experienced teachers, as well as a few subjects from such related professions as psychiatry, clinical psychology, and social work. In general the approach was to ask each subject to indicate which if any of the 60 statements he considered descriptive of a good teacher, which described a poor teacher, and which items were ambiguous or unimportant. This step completed, each subject was asked

to distribute the 60 items into a nine rank Q sort, from most to least important in evaluating teachers. The results of these studies are reported in detail elsewhere (Daniels, 1964; Dyer, 1965), and are consistent in supporting the following general conclusions:

1. Differences in Values. The initial findings support the proposition that whether they be teacher educators, teachers, or teacher candidates, people differ in their beliefs about the teachers' role. Each of the 60 statements was endorsed by some subjects, and also, each was rejected by some. Each of the six roles was endorsed by some subjects and rejected by others. While some inter-group differences appeared, divergencies were found within these groups of educational psychologists, school administrators, and teachers. For example, a study of 90 elementary teachers in Los Angeles City Schools (Daniels, 1964) showed that all six roles were supported by some of the teachers and rejected by others, with no role being predominant.

Some of the group differences in concept of the teacher role which appeared in the data are rather provocative. In one case, a number of the identical statements which a large majority of the teacher educators rejected or said should not be considered in evaluation were said to be most important by the group of experienced teachers (Dyer, 1966). A second instance, the clinical psychologists, as a group, tended to

disapprove of teachers engaging in activities which have often been regarded as essential to the teacher's mental hygiene function and which were considered to be very important by the teachers engaged in elementary and special education. This admittedly small sample of clinical psychologists insisted that the mental hygiene function should be left to specialists and that teachers should limit themselves to the teaching of traditional subjects. And still another instance, the expressed teacher role expectations of an instructor of a course in methods of teaching mathematics were apparently at odds with those of several instructors in educational psychology.

2. Problems in Semantics. The semantic problems in building an instrument by which to describe good teachers are formidable. In writing the statements, the attempt was to use simple language and reduce ambiguity. Nevertheless, individual interviews revealed that the very item which seemed especially meaningful and well-expressed to one subject could be regarded as nonsense by another. For example an item said by an educational psychologist to be significant and specific was called "empty jargon" by a teacher educator. Again and again, highly interested subjects asked, "you don't mean it <u>that</u> way, do you?" and recommended alternative wordings, the better to express--from the point of view of their <u>own</u> value systems--the meaning of a statement they could not quite endorse. The intensity of the reaction to the words themselves was unexpected. In the case of some subjects, dis-

comfort at the language of the items tended to mount to the point of interfering with the task. One experienced teacher boggled at a troublesome word to the point where she felt unable to assign a rank to an otherwise approved statement.

3. Emotional Reactions to Value Differences. The proposition that different concepts of the good teacher are not only tenable but required by the nature of our society appeared to arouse strong feelings of uneasiness and even of hostility in many subjects. Among some groups, particularly the graduate students and experienced teachers, a number anxiously rejected the relativistic point of view and insisted on a single set of absolute dimensions to define the good teacher. It was as though to surrender the concept of a single ideal standard would bring about anarchy and no standards of competence at all.

Two additional sources of anxiety were expressed. One had to do with dismay at being confronted with the fact of major differences--or resemblances--between a particular subject's point of view and the point of view of others whom he knew. To differ from a respected colleague or to find that in significant ways one's views agreed with those of a disliked colleague was obviously upsetting. Also, it became clear that the obligation to expose beliefs which might possibly be contrary to those approved by significant others was highly threatening to some subjects. Their tension and

dismay resembled that described by Asch (1958) and Crutchfield (1955) in conformity studies in which sharp individual differences were found in the capacity to maintain a judgment in the face of opposition. One observation seems obvious, and that is that these people would not have reacted as intensely as they did if they had not had a strong commitment to their work and to the issues involved.

Practical Implications

At the present time, institutions which select and train candidates or employ and evaluate teachers commonly maintain a file of information about the individual teacher candidates or teachers. If the approach described above is sound and the task is to match candidates with judges who are likely to value their characteristics, then two separate files are needed. The first file should contain information about the expectations of the individual judges and the second file should contain corresponding information about the candidates. Furthermore, the information in the candidates' files will be quite different from that presently gathered, since it will be determined by the nature of the information in the files on the master teachers, principals, etc. Because there are, as yet, only limited empirical data on the nature of the judges' expectations, we can only partially predict how the new files will differ from the old.

To obtain the needed information about the expectations of large numbers of individual judges, it will be necessary to develop new procedures, for at present the necessary tools do not exist. The tool-developing task is not easy, mainly because individuals are not fully aware of their own judgmental processes nor of the bases for their judgments. Neither are individuals always willing to report frankly those processes of which they are aware. However, a way around this difficulty may lie in asking persons who are being judged (candidates and teachers) what are the expectations particular superordinates have communicated to them, whether intentionally or not (Sorenson, 1966).

The fact that differences in concepts of the teacher's role with all their effects upon teacher evaluation are not commonly recognized nor systematically taken into account has had and continues to have the consequence that those who train teachers are frequently and unknowingly working at cross-purposes with those who employ teachers, with experienced teachers, and with one another as well (Dyer, 1966). Once the members of a given faculty have become clear about their own teacher expectations, they may be able to arrive at agreement over the particular kind of teacher they want their institution to produce. This is not to say that every teacher training institution should be expected to train

students for every type of school and every type of school administration. It does mean, however, that faculties will be given the opportunity to plan a curriculum more adequately suited to their own purpose.

Given a more explicit and stable criterion, the selection office can begin, for the first time, to determine the predictive validity of their procedures. Moreover, the counciling service will be able, for the first time, to give candidates reasonably accurate information about what they will be expected to learn in a particular school and about the kind of competition to be expected from other students. If a candidate or inexperienced teacher is placed in a school where the superordinates want him to do the things he wants as a teacher to do, the teacher drop-out rate might even be reduced. At the very least, the wear and tear resulting from inter-personal conflict will be greatly diminished --- an undeniably worthwhile gain.

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